



Creating a story: where to start?




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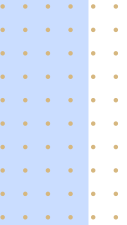
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Well, picture this. You're ready to write your story. You are sitting down in front of a keyboard or a notebook. You've made yourself a cup of tea and turned on some good music or created complete silence. You've straightened your back, raised the pen up and...


Nothing. Nothing is to be written or created. Nothing comes to your mind. Does it sound familiar? In fact, it means only one thing – your story is not ripe yet. Let's find out how to make your story alive on paper or a screen.

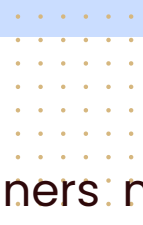
THE GOAL



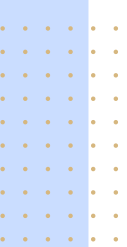
The goal of the story is the first place to start with. If you can not write a single word, then it's time to specify your goal. However, we advise you not just to think about it, but to write it down. If you write it down, it can appear in front of you anytime while your story is in progress and it will bring you back in the right direction.

To distinguish the goal, try to answer the question: What do I want my readers, listeners or viewers to do after they have finished my story? For example, you want them to cry, sign a petition, come to a picket, join your organization or donate money for it. All your subsequent stories should be aimed at this final action. Whenever you lose the point and don't know what to say next – just refer to your goal.





And this is a place where lots of beginners make a common mistake. Problems that the non-profit sector deals with can be not just large but global. And this fact really distracts us from the real goal.



For example, we've decided that our goal is to eliminate unawareness about the processing of plastic in the CIS. Or to tell people about terrorism in Pakistan. But these are more about the purpose of your organization, not the specific story. Few to zero stories can achieve such a large-scale effect. But we can push our viewers towards one specific action, which will become a drop in the large sea and help to make a little step.

YOUR LIMITATIONS

Your limitations can appear in several areas. First, the limitations of your organization. Are there any banned topics? For example, you may not be welcome to talk about religion, or vice versa – try to reveal violations related to the Church. Or you cannot use obscene language or some particular words or phrases or it's better to avoid them.

The second limitation is about real people. Can we mention real names and locations of the heroes of our story? Can we tell any part of the story from an ethical point of view? Can you say everything? These are important questions to think about before you start creating a story.

